

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CARACA 04185 191857Z

51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 094253

O 191653Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8455

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 4185

EXDIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A) PFOR VE

SUBJ: SECRETARY'S VISIT: ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ

1. CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO VENEZUELA WILL BE THE RELATIONSHIP ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ, WHO SO COMPLETELY BESTRIDES THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT THAT NO DECISION ON ANY MAJOR MATTER CAN BE TAKEN WITHOUT HIS ASSENT. THE FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT OF PEREZ' AIMS AND PERSONALITY IS THEREFORE SUBMITTED TO SUPPLEMENT THE BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON PEREZ ALREADY AVAILABLE TO THE SECRETARY.

2. THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT PEREZ, BUOYED UP BY VENEZUELA'S OIL BONANZA AND STRONG DOMESTIC POLITICAL SUPPORT, INCREASINGLY REGARDS HIMSELF AS THE LOGICAL SUCCESSOR TO VENEZUELA'S GREAT (AND ONLY) NATIONAL HERO SIMON BOLIVAR. PEREZ BELIEVES HIMSELF ENTRUSTED WITH A MISSION TO LEAD VENEZUELA OUT OF ITS UNWORTHY PAST AS A POOR AND EXPLOITED BACKWATER INTO A BRILLIANT FUTURE A PROSPEROUS AND POWERFUL HEMISPHERE LEADER AND SPOKESMAN FOR THE DEVELOPING VERSUS THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. ALL HIS POLICIES, DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN, ARE DIRECTED TOWARD THESE AMBITIOUS GOALS.

3. PEREZ IS A LIFELONG POLITICIAN WHO HAS SERVED OVER THE YEARS AS DEPUTY, MINISTER AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF HIS POLITICAL PARTY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CARACA 04185 191857Z

NOW 52, PEREZ KNOWS HIS COUNTRY AND PEOPLE WELL. HIS DOMESTIC

PROGRAM AIMS TOWARD BETTERING THE LOT OF VENEZUELA'S POOR AND UNDERPRIVILEGED THROUGH A MORE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL WEALTH. PEREZ FEARS THAT IF THIS IS NOT DONE, THEN DEMOCRACY IS FINISHED IN VENEZUELA, AND A DICTATORSHIP OF THE RIGHT OR LEFT IS INEVITABLE. FOR PEREZ PETROLEUM IS THE GREATEST PEACEFUL BARGAINING WEAPON (HE CAREFULLY CALLS IT AN "INSTRUMENT") IN HISTORY. HE IS DETERMINED TO USE IT TO THE HILT--ITS REVENUES TO TRANSFORM VENEZUELA INTERNALLY, ITS POWER TO GIVE VENEZUELA PRIDE OF PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY OF NATIONS, THE GLORY FROM BOTH TO ENSURE PEREZ A NOT INCONSIDERABLE PLACE IN HISTORY. THIS IS PEREZ' BOLIVARIAN VISION.

4. PEREZ' FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES AND HIS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE THIRD WORLD FLOW FROM HIS POLITICAL REALISM AND VAULTING PERSONAL AMBITION. PEREZ IS KEENLY AWARE OF THE CONSTRAINTS WHICH VENEZUELA'S SIZE AND POPULATION PLACE UPON HIS COUNTRY'S IMPACT ABROAD, AND IS ATTEMPTING TO BROADEN HIS AND VENEZUELA'S INFLUENCE THROUGH SPEARHEADING AN EXTRAORDINARY DRIVE TO INTEGRATE LATIN AMERICA AND BUILD THIRD WORLD SOLIDARITY. HE HAS ADOPTED THE CENTERS-OF-POWER CONCEPT TO MAKE THE REMARKABLE ASSERTION, DURING HIS MARCH 18 SPEECH TO MEXICAN OIL WORKERS, THAT IN TODAY'S MULTIPOLAR WORLD "ONE OF THESE CENTERS OF POWER IS THE THIRD WORLD, THE DEVELOPING WORLD." WHILE THESE OBJECTIVES WOULD EXCEED BOLIVAR'S WILDEST DREAMS, PEREZ IS EXPERT IN PLAYING UPON LATIN AMERICAN AND THIRD WORLD FRUSTRATIONS TOWARDS THE "GREAT POWERS," AS EVIDENCED BY HIS MANIPULATION OF LATIN AMERICAN RESENTMENT AGAINST THE U.S. TRADE REFORM ACT, HIS EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A NEW ECONOMIC SYSTEM FOR LATIN AMERICA (SELA), AND HIS VOCAL SUPPORT FOR PANAMA'S CANAL ASPIRATIONS. PEREZ HAS ALSO PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN MAINTAINING OPEC UNITY AND IN HELPING CREATE THAT IMAGINATIVE COLLAGE KNOWN AS THE "SEVEN," WHICH DEMONSTRATED ITS SOLIDARITY AT THE RECENT PARIS PREPCON. FINALLY, PEREZ HAS ADROITLY NEUTRALIZED THE OIL PRICE ISSUE IN LATIN AMERICA AND DISSIPATED MUCH OF THE ANIMUS AGAINST VENEZUELA AS A RICH COUNTRY BY OFFERING ECONOMIC HELP TO ITS POORER NEIGHBORS.

5. PEREZ' CAMPAIGN SLOGAN OF "DEMOCRACY WITH ENERGY" MARKS HIS LIFESTYLE. EVEN UNDER RECENT DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS VENEZUELANS HAVE ALWAYS PREFERRED STRONG LEADERS, AND PEREZ
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CARACA 04185 191857Z

IS NO EXCEPTION. HE IS UP AT DAWN FOR AN HOUR'S EXERCISE IN THE GYM AT LA CASONA BEFORE PLUNGING INTO A CROWDED OFFICIAL SCHEDULE WHICH OFTEN ENDS LATE AT NIGHT AND LEAVES HIS COLLEAGUES LIMP. DURING HIS RECENT TRIPS TO MEXICO AND ALGIERS HIS PACE AND ABILITY TO GO WITHOUT MUCH SLEEP WORE OUT HIS HOSTS AND COMPANIONS ALIKE. PHYSICIANS OBSERVING HIM MARVEL THAT HIS HEART CAN STAND IT.

6. PEREZ IS AN ERECT, TOUGH AND VIRILE MAN--A TRUE LATIN MACHO TYPE--WHOSE RATHER UGLY FACE IS FRAMED WITH SIDEBURNS BOLIVAR WOULD ENVY. AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SPEAKER, IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION PEREZ' MANNER CAN RUN CALCULATED SCALES FROM GENIALITY TO FORMIDABILITY. WITH THE SECRETARY, PEREZ MAY INWARDLY EXPERIENCE THE DIFFIDENCE OF A MAN WHO NEVER FINISHED COLLEGE AND WHO UNTIL HE BECAME PRESIDENT KNEW RELATIVELY LITTLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE WILL ALSO FEEL FRUSTRATED AT NOT BEING ABLE TO TALK DIRECTLY WITH THE SECRETARY IN ENGLISH (HE HAS MORE THAN ONCE UNSUCCESSFULLY TRIED TO LEARN ENGLISH), AS HIS DIRECT AND FRANK STYLE IS INHIBITED BY INTERPRETERS. ACCUSTOMED TO DOMINATING SITUATIONS AROUND HIM, PEREZ HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY SELF-CONFIDENT IN HIS KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF POWER. THIS REINFORCES HIS TENDENCY TO MONOLOGUES. WITH THE SECRETARY HE WILL DOUBTLESS EXERT HIMSELF TO CHARM AND IMPRESS. BUT IF ONE IS TO BE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER, THE LATTER WOULD WIN OUT.

7. IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, PEREZ UNDERSTANDS THE REALITIES OF VENEZUELA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, THE HEMISPHERE, AND THE WORLD. HE WILL BE WELL PREPARED FOR HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SECRETARY. HE WILL BE FORTHRIGHT, EVEN AGGRESSIVE, IN PRESENTING VENEZUELA'S CASE, BUT HE WILL WANT TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNITED STATES. AT THE SAME TIME HE WILL RESIST ANY ATTEMPT TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN VENEZUELA AND OPEC. HE WILL BE SENSITIVE ABOUT HIS PRETENSIONS TO BOLIVARIAN LEADERSHIP. BUT, ON THE WHOLE, WE BELIEVE, PEREZ WILL BE RECEPTIVE TO THE SKILLED PRESENTATION OF THE MUTUALITY OF HIS COUNTRY'S INTERESTS WITH THOSE OF THE UNITED STATES, AND THE WAYS AND MEANS OF BUILDING THEREON.
ASENCIO

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT, FOREIGN RELATIONS, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchandr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CARACA04185
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750138-0385
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750433/aaaabexx.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchandr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2003 by buchandr>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECRETARY'S VISIT: ASSESSMENT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, VE, US, (KISSINGER, HENRY A), (PEREZ, CARLOS ANDRES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006